

Research On Life Long Learning**Mr. Hasahudin bin Hasan**

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pss18001@stdmail.ump.edu.my**Abstract**

Lifelong Learning (LLL) has been attributed to various benefit. This study intends to give a clear concept of the definition of LLL, together with summary of its top advantages and finally its practical application to University Malaysia Pahang (UMP). By definition, it means diversifiable, adaptable and applicable for the respective learners around their whole life time. Top most advantages can be categorized as adapting and coping with modern rapid changing world, higher remuneration for white color jobs and most importantly self-content for high quality physical life and virtual thought. LLL has always been a good strategy to make opportunity for deserving people to practice it whole life and take maximum benefit out of it. UMP is pursuing to know their position about lifelong learning perspective to find out their optimum course of action. This study was conceived to analyze lifelong learning scenario in UMP. It used a descriptive analysis together with multiple regression from primary data with structured questionnaire. The study found that almost all the learners were quite satisfied for the services they received in their life time. Maximum variables except a few asked to the beneficiaries of UMP have positive contribution to overall impact and feedback of LLL graduate marketability. The study suggested some measures with emphasize for specific subject and certificate program for the prospective beneficiaries.

Keywords: Lifelong learning, Top benefits, Overall impact, Overall feedback.**Introduction**

Lifelong Learning (LLL) contributes to numerous number of benefits. We need to provide operational definition before making an opinion about it. Friesen and Anderson (2004) defines the term lifelong which has been circulated for more than about twenty-five years applied to education or learning. Different settings and contexts can be related together for the lifelong learning outcomes. Therefore, it can be literally said that learning should take place from cradle to grave covering all stages of life cycle. At the latest version, it includes from starting of schools to the final destination of the workplace together with serving home and community. Where a society provides ample opportunity for learning at any stage of life irrespective of age for all the capable person therein, it is the vision of a learning society (Green 2002). Lifelong learning can also be achieved through continuous gathering of knowledge and skills gained from facing real experience in life (Wikipedia 2011). In the literature of lifelong learning, we find a possibility of arriving some uniform description of the term. The most likely one is a concise agreement of the meaning and applicability of the term that should be conceivable, possible and attainable (Aspin and Chapman 2007). LLL encourage individuals to continuous gain of their understandings, knowledge and values together with respective applicability with confidence (Bryce, Frigo et al. 2000). This paper is an attempt to describe the different impacts, feedbacks, interest and comparison with suggestions from students and find out the

real scenario of Lifelong learning graduate marketability at University Malaysia Pahang (UMP) so that authority can select the right course of actions for their future service and operation in an efficient and effective manner.

The objectives of this study is to evaluate the impacts, feedbacks, interests and comparisons with suggestions on ongoing programs from the beneficiaries/students and see the real perspective of the lifelong learning graduate marketability at UMP.

The specific objectives are to evaluate the impacts by segregating 21 different independent variables (From 1 through 21) and find out whether the program (1) has positive impact in executing daily tasks (2) improves students' knowledge level (3) improves students' skills level (4) improves students' leadership skills (5) helps students in managing students' time in a better way (6) helps students in managing their professional tasks in a better way (7) helps in managing a new tasks in a better way (8) improves students' analytical skills (9) helps in managing additional tasks in a better way (10) helps in prioritizing their professional tasks in a better way (11) makes students able to apply the knowledge/skills gained during it in their current job (12) makes student assigned to leadership roles after its completion (13) makes students given additional responsibilities after its completion (14) makes students regularly assigned to new tasks after its completion (15) makes students' employers widen their job scope after its completion (16) makes students' immediate boss recognize their achievement upon its completion (17) makes students' co-workers' recognize their achievement upon its completion (18) makes students' sub-ordinates' recognize their achievement upon its completion (19) makes students receive promotion upon its completion (20) helps students receive salary increment after its completion (21) helps students receive salary increments of different ranges upon its completion.

The specific objectives are also to evaluate the feedbacks by segregating 17 different independent variables (From 22 through 38) and find out whether the program (22) has positive feedback on learning outlook (23) was relevant to their job requirement (24) improves students' marketability (25) content was current and satisfactory (26) content was adequate (27) accommodate their personal learning style (28) satisfies students with the content (29) venue was liked by the student (30) timing was liked by the students (31) was liked by the student for presentation and delivery (32) was liked by the students for the food / refreshments provided (33) benefited the students (34) was worth of their life (35) was worth for money spent (36) was recognized by the students organization (37) will be recommended by the students for their colleagues (38) will be planned by the students for attending future lifelong program offered by UMP.

Further specific objectives are also to evaluate interests and comparisons together with suggestions by analyzing 4 different variables (From 39 through 42) such as (39) Evaluate about the students' interested subject of the program offered (40) Evaluate about the students' interested certificate of the program offered (41) Compare the students' UMP program with other programs they have attended (42) Students' suggestion to improve UMP's program in future.

We have considered the time period beginning January 2, 2017 and ending September 29, 2017 altogether coming about 9 months. Students who have graduated through various LLL programs from the year 2016 and 2017 has been considered as respondents of the study. This study has been conducted with lifelong learning programs conducted at various levels namely Executive Diploma, Executive Degree, Executive Master etc.

This is very much the interest of the UMP authority to know the services they are delivering to the students for study and continuing lifelong commitment with them. UMP has been Alma Mater and mentor of all students since its inception. Now it is high time to check whether the UMP service recipients/students are satisfied. If students are satisfied, then UMP is doing its job and its marketability should be upheld. This study tries to sort out these issues.

This the study for a particular period and for a particular students graduating in a particular semester. The response could be different if we consider next batch by extending the study.

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning encompasses the total perspective as a whole including non-formal, informal and formal learning. (Tissot 2004) describes the prime concepts of different types of learning as (1) Non-formal learning happens in planned activities but not explicitly designated e.g. vocational techniques acquired when working (2) Informal learning happens when carrying out daily routine activities in family and entertainment sometimes termed as accidental way of learning and finally (3) Formal learning is the most common form and it happens within an institutions or organization in a designated and structured form recognized by certificate.

(Masle 2011) noted five great benefits for lifelong learning. **Firstly**, it is the way towards good remuneration. It is also the smart way to get promotion for the latest knowledge and information. **Secondly**, it creates self-esteem and confidence by approaching latest perspectives with tough new challenge. Although gaining latest knowledge is not a leisure, but it gives the real amusement to achieve something worthy. **Thirdly**, it gives the liberty to senior learners. Seniors or Adult classmates exchange thoughts and ideas and enrich among themselves. These types of learning bring good projects or real goods and services rather than satisfactory exam grades. There needs less memorization and often results in relative and ambiguous answer. **Fourthly**, it is the shift of schooling to distance learning and sometimes going to online method. The learners can make their study even in the bedroom or bathrobe whatever they like and they graduate without ever entering the campus. This is specially favor the learners who have definite time and space constraints. Further it gives flexible enrolments or registration at the user convenience. **Finally**, it makes learners to get scholarship often and regularly basis.

Lifelong learning (LLL) has always been considered as including all techniques that are in effect to make opportunities for anyone to gain knowledge all over their life time. It will therefore appear as a process of unstoppable efforts for whole lifetime to satisfy both individual and social needs and requirements (Abukari 2005). Lifelong learning is a conceptual framework for activities people involved throughout their lives for improving their respective knowledge and skills in designated area for some specific motives related to themselves or society as a whole (Field 2001).

People are always gaining new techniques and knowledge individually at home collectively in society and of course in the working places as well. To understand, explain and process data and information, one must have sufficient knowledge and therefore lifelong learning emphasizes and recognize all forms of learning available.

(Hildebrand 2008) found that (a) Continuous learning sharpens peoples' minds and helps preventing memory loss even in the old ages. In general, the brain has been benefitted from continuous learning. It is found that people blessed with continuous education are less prone to have dementia in their later age (b) Learning makes people confident since non-routine life or new challenge and make fear overcome more easily by gaining confidence (c) Learning sharpens the interpersonal skills and socialization by sharing our experience with others that help them learn further and it upholds our relationships with them (d) Learning push forward career to the next level for the person who wants to pursue advancement. Existing skills help to learn further skills that improves our opportunity for further career growth. (e) Finally learning makes people capable to communicate their learning further in the form of speaking, reading, listening and writing in their jobs like report preparation or presentation or even talk to very higher authority.

Methodology

Since we want to find out the impacts, feedbacks, interests and comparison together with suggestions of the students of lifelong education with UMP, it is a descriptive study in nature. We have considered the time period beginning January 2, 2017 and ending September 29, 2017 altogether coming about 9 months. Students who have graduated through various LLL programs from the year 2016 and 2017 has been considered as respondents of the study. Total number of students was 450 and target sample in the study was 143. Primary data were collected through structured Questionnaire and Partial interview. Descriptive statistics and Multiple Regression analysis were used as study tools. In addition, Cronbach Alpha was used for reliability statistics.

Result and discussion

A. Descriptive Analysis

As per Table -1, 41.30% of the students has been within the range of 30-39 years meaning more students are on mid ages. 72.70% and 27.30% of the students are male and female respectively meaning male dominance in numbers. About 70.60% students are Malay with next highest race Indians (14.70%). About 78.30% respondents have work experience of more than 5 years meaning students have quite working experience. Most students (79.70%) work in private organization. Most students are diploma holder (30.10%) with next highest Masters holder. Among them 62.90% holds professional certificate whereas 37.10% does not.

Table-1: Students General Characteristics

| Age Range | Frequency | Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| 20-29 years | 35 | 24.50 | 24.5 |
| 30-39 years | 59 | 41.30 | 65.70 |
| 40-49 years | 39 | 27.30 | 93.0 |
| 50 years plus | 10 | 7.00 | 100.00 |
| Gender | | | |
| Male | 104 | 72.70 | 72.70 |
| Female | 39 | 27.30 | 100.00 |
| Race | | | |
| Malay | 101 | 70.60 | 70.60 |
| Chinese | 4 | 2.80 | 73.40 |
| Indian | 21 | 14.70 | 88.10 |
| Others | 17 | 11.90 | 100.00 |
| Experience | | | |
| Less than 2 years | 14 | 9.80 | 9.80 |
| 2 to 5 years | 17 | 11.90 | 21.70 |
| More than 5 years | 112 | 78.30 | 100.00 |
| Organization Type Worked | | | |
| Government | 6 | 4.20 | 4.20 |
| Semi Government | 5 | 3.50 | 7.70 |
| Government Link | 10 | 7.00 | 14.70 |
| Private | 114 | 79.70 | 94.40 |
| Own Business | 5 | 3.50 | 97.90 |
| Non-Profit | 1 | 0.70 | 98.60 |
| Others | 2 | 1.40 | 100.00 |
| Highest Qualification | | | |
| SPM/STPM | 29 | 20.30 | 20.30 |
| Diploma | 43 | 30.10 | 50.30 |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|----|-------|--------|
| Bachelor | 32 | 22.40 | 72.70 |
| Masters | 37 | 25.90 | 98.60 |
| PhD | 2 | 1.40 | 100.00 |
| Professional Certificate | | | |
| No | 90 | 62.90 | 69.90 |
| Yes | 53 | 37.10 | 100.00 |

As per Table-2, Overall the students agreed (Mean 4.02 and S.D 0.60) with the impact of lifelong education program. This means UMP is doing its job satisfactorily. Among all variables, students approached to strongly agree for increasing their analytical skill (4.43) but they are not very much agreeing that they will get salary increment upon completion (3.69) of the program. The students are also giving diversified opinion about improving analytical skills (S. D 3.41) and boss recognizing achievements (S.D 2.56)

Table -2: Impact of life long program

Scale : 5 (SA) Strongly Agree - 4 (A) Agree - 3 (N) Not Sure - 2 (D) Disagree - 1 (SD) Strongly Disagree

| S. L | Variable Name | 5 (SA) | 4 (A) | 3 (N) | 2 (D) | 1 (SD) | Mean | S.D. |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 01 | Positive impact in daily task | 41 | 95 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 4.20 | 0.65 |
| 02 | Improving knowledge | 51 | 85 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4.27 | 0.70 |
| 03 | Improving skill | 48 | 88 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4.24 | 0.72 |
| 04 | Improving leader skill | 49 | 86 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4.24 | 0.73 |
| 05 | Managing time better way | 40 | 91 | 9 | 1 | 2 | 4.16 | 0.68 |
| 06 | Managing professional task | 39 | 92 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 4.13 | 0.76 |
| 07 | Managing new task better way | 41 | 94 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 4.18 | 0.70 |
| 08 | Improving analytical skill | 42 | 89 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 4.43 | 3.41 |
| 09 | Managing additional task | 46 | 90 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 4.22 | 0.71 |
| 10 | Prioritize professional task | 44 | 90 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4.20 | 0.69 |
| 11 | Applying knowledge currently | 46 | 83 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4.17 | 0.75 |
| 12 | Leadership roles after program | 40 | 87 | 11 | 3 | 2 | 4.12 | 0.74 |
| 13 | Additional responsibilities | 43 | 79 | 16 | 3 | 2 | 4.10 | 0.78 |
| 14 | New task after program | 33 | 80 | 22 | 5 | 3 | 3.94 | 0.84 |
| 15 | Wide job scope after program | 35 | 80 | 23 | 5 | 0 | 4.01 | 0.74 |
| 16 | Boss recognizing | 44 | 71 | 22 | 4 | 2 | 4.25 | 2.56 |
| 17 | Co-workers recognizing | 39 | 85 | 15 | 4 | 0 | 4.11 | 0.69 |
| 18 | Sub-ordinates recognizing | 42 | 85 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 4.15 | 0.69 |
| 19 | Promotion upon completion | 31 | 63 | 40 | 6 | 3 | 3.79 | 0.90 |
| 20 | Salary increment | 28 | 60 | 41 | 11 | 3 | 3.69 | 0.94 |
| Overall | | | | | | | 4.02 | 0.60 |

As per Table-3, Overall the students agreed (Mean 4.21 and S.D 0.72) with the feedback of lifelong education program. This shows good performance for UMP. Students thought that the program had positive impact on learning outlook (4.21) and they agreed to plan for future courses (4.11) with diverged opinion (S.D 0.85). But the they were not very much agreeing satisfaction with food/refreshment (Mean 3.91).

Table -3: Feedback of life long program

Scale : 5 (SA) Strongly Agree - 4 (A) Agree - 3 (N) Not Sure - 2 (D) Disagree - 1 (SD) Strongly Disagree

| S. L | Variable Name | 5 (SD) | 4 (A) | 3 (N) | 2 (D) | 1 (SD) | Mean | S.D |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|-------------|-------------|
| 22 | Positive impact learning | 48 | 84 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 4.21 | 0.71 |
| 23 | Relevant job requirement | 43 | 90 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 4.18 | 0.71 |
| 24 | Improving marketability | 38 | 90 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 4.11 | 0.73 |
| 25 | Content contemporary | 34 | 96 | 9 | 2 | 2 | 4.10 | 0.68 |
| 26 | Content adequate | 33 | 97 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 4.09 | 0.67 |
| 27 | Space personal learning | 41 | 90 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4.16 | 0.70 |
| 28 | Satisfied with contents | 33 | 101 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 4.11 | 0.69 |
| 29 | Liking venue | 42 | 90 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 4.17 | 0.70 |
| 30 | Liking timing | 45 | 85 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 4.17 | 0.73 |
| 31 | Liking presentation | 43 | 91 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 4.18 | 0.71 |
| 32 | Liking food / refreshment | 31 | 79 | 25 | 6 | 2 | 3.91 | 0.82 |
| 33 | Program benefit | 44 | 89 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 4.18 | 0.74 |
| 34 | Program worth of time | 39 | 92 | 8 | 2 | 2 | 4.14 | 0.70 |
| 35 | Program worth of spending | 44 | 84 | 9 | 5 | 1 | 4.15 | 0.74 |
| 36 | Organization recognizing | 40 | 83 | 17 | 1 | 2 | 4.10 | 0.73 |
| 37 | Recommendation | 46 | 83 | 10 | 2 | 2 | 4.18 | 0.73 |
| 38 | Plant to attend future | 47 | 77 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 4.11 | 0.85 |
| Overall | | | | | | | 4.21 | 0.72 |

B. Multiple Regression Analysis

a) Regression Analysis for impact of lifelong education

Multiple regression was used to assess the ability of 21 independent variables (Positive impact in daily task, Improving knowledge, Improving skill, Improving leadership skill, Managing time better way, Managing professional task better way, Managing new task better way, Improving analytical skill, Managing additional tasks better way, Prioritize professional tasks better way, Applying knowledge/skills in current job, Leadership roles after program, Additional responsibilities after program, New tasks after program, Widen job scope after program, Boss recognizing achievements, Co-workers recognizing achievements, Sub-ordinate recognizing achievements, Promotion upon completion, Salary increment upon completion, Salary increment range) to predict overall impact of lifelong education. Primary analyses have been carried out to ensure that there is no violation of the assumptions undertaken such as normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity.

As a **Model Summary** R Square and adjusted R Square are .664 and .606 explaining above 60% of the variance for overall impact of lifelong education. The ANOVA explaining the Regression model is statistically significant (Sig. = .000).

As per the contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable overall feedback of lifelong education, Constant value is -.094 with statistical insignificance (P value .759) and does not contribute to the regression model. All the independent variables are statistically insignificant except Improving knowledge (Beta .430), Prioritizing professional tasks better way (Beta .314) and Boss recognizing achievements (Beta .267) with positively contribution to the overall impact of lifelong education program.

b) Regression Analysis for feedback of lifelong education

Multiple regression was used to assess the ability of 17 independent variables (Positive impact on learning outlook, Relevant to job requirement, Improving marketability, Contents current and contemporary, Content adequate, Accommodating personal learning style, Satisfied with contents, Liking venue, Liking timing, Liking presentation and delivery, Liking food/refreshment, Program benefit, Program worth of time, Program worth of money spent, Organization recognizing UMP, Recommendation to colleagues, Plan to attend future) to

predict overall feedback of lifelong education. Primary analyses have been carried out to ensure that there is no violation of the assumptions undertaken such as normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity.

As a **Model Summary** R Square and adjusted R Square are .853 and .833 explaining about 85 per cent of the variance in overall impact. The ANOVA explaining the Regression model is statistically significant (Sig. = .000).

As per the contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable overall feedback of lifelong education, Constant value is -.294 with statistically less significant (P value .085) and does not contribute to the regression model. All the independent variables are statistically insignificant except Contents current and contemporary (Beta .212), Content adequate (Beta .254), Liking food/refreshment (Beta .201), Organization recognizing UMP (Beta .163) and Plan to attend future (Beta .145) with positively contribution to the overall feedback of lifelong education program. But Liking venue (Beta -.183) is negatively contributing independent variable. This may be the case that students are very much involved with the natural beauty of the UMP causing distraction to their education.

C. Valuable suggestions to improve UMP's program

Maximum students did not suggest anything and put it blank. One student suggests to get to very experienced teachers and add additional subjects. Someone comments that the program is very good and no need for improvement. Someone says to consider the foreign expertise to improve the quality. One student asks for Mandarin and English course class. Some put no comments and says nil. One mentions simply good while another mention all is good. A student mentions that so far the work is satisfactory. One emphasizes on publicizing of the programs to outreach potential participants. A student gives opinion for more options for them and for increasing number of centers across Malaysia. Someone demands more improved lecture and slide presentation. One takes the view of more research papers. One comments to be more flexible in longer duration to avoid clashing and to ensure quality. Some say very good. One student demand for strong lecture showing better commitment to the program module. One request for keeping current facilities for younger in future. There is also request for to improve class and study room with internet IT facilities and library as well.

Conclusion

Generally, the students agreed with the impact of lifelong education program meaning UMP is doing its job satisfactorily. They strongly thought with diversified opinion that this will increase their analytical skill and bosses' recognizing their achievements. But they were not very much sure about their promotion and salary increment. Maximum thought that they could get a small amount of salary increment for the course undertaken. In addition, the students also agreed with the feedback of lifelong education program in UMP. This shows good performance for this university as well. Students though that the program had positive impact on learning outlook and they agreed to plan for future association. But the they had little reservation about food/refreshment.

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